Modernisation Scheme for Agriculture in Maharashtra

308. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE. Will the MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of special schemes to modernise agriculture in Maharashtra to make them self-sufficient in the production of foodgrains; and

(b) the details of steps taken to provide high yielding variety of seeds and fertilisers in time at cheaper rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) Union Government do not make a distinction between states and union territories in identification/implementation of plan programmes and projects. However, the Government of Maharashtra has initiated steps to implement crop production strategies in consonance with the agro climatic zones, with the active involvement and support of Agricultural Universities located in different parts of the state.

(b) The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is organizing Zonal and All India Conferences with die states to take care of their requirement of Improved sees and fertilisers. While prices of urea are subject to price distribution and movement controls, there is a scheme for concessional sale of decontrolled fertilisers such as DAP, MOP, SSP and complexes which benefits all states including Maharashtra.

Entry of Multinationals in Agricultural Sector

†309. SHRI BARJINDER SINGH HAMDARD:
SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA: Will the Minister of Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention have been drawn to the news-item published in die 'Economic Times' dated 26th October, 1999 under the caption 'Pepsi to begin Mock buster rice fanning";

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that multinational companies are now stepping into the agricultural sector of the country; and

(c) if so, die facts in this regard and Government's reaction with regard to entry of multinational companies in die agricultural sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO):(a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) There is no bar on multinationals entring into contract farming arrangements with fanners for agro-processing/agro-exports, provided that they follow the relevant rules and regulations, in this regard.

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†Original notice of the Question received in Hindi.